

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-26 are pending in the application, with 1, 10, 13, 16, 21, and 25 being the independent claims. New claim 26 is sought to be added. Claims 1-5, 7-10, 12-13, 15-16, and 20-25 are sought to be amended to clarify the claimed subject matter. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute similar or broader claims, with respect to the amended claims, in the future. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

These amendments should be entered after final rejection because they reduce the issues for appeal and/or place the application in condition for allowance without requiring any further search or consideration by the Examiner.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Information Disclosure Statement and Request for Information under 37 C.F.R. § 1.105

On pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action mailed on 11/28/2007 (11/28/07 OA), the Examiner indicated that the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) filed October 29, 2007 has been received, but that the references cited in the IDS have been only preliminarily considered.

On page 2 of the 11/28/07 OA, in a Request for Information under 37 C.F.R. § 1.105, the Examiner requests that Applicants provide:

“the relevancy, or explanation of how the prior arts documents submitted in the information disclosure statement are relevant, or alternatively, at least to submit only the documents that are relevant to the application for consideration, and the examination purposes.”

The volume of references cited in the previously submitted IDS was the result of thorough compliance with Applicants' duty of disclosure under 37 C.F.R. § 1.56 to disclose information that is material to the patentability of the claimed invention, for example through citing related applications. Applicants do not represent that they have analyzed each reference in detail to determine which, if any, may be material to the claims.

Further, Applicants remind the Examiner that 37 C.F.R. § 1.105 does not require Applicants to point out documents that are most significant and/or relevant. Thus, the Examiner has requested information that goes beyond that which is required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.56 and 1.105.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider, and acknowledge consideration of, the IDS timely filed on August 15, 2007.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the current Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-25 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Published Patent Application No. 2005/0071657 to Ryan (hereinafter, "Ryan"). For the reasons set forth below, Applicants respectfully traverse.

“A Document Retention Duration”

Claims 1, 10, 16, and 25 recite features that distinguish over the applied reference.

For example, claim 1 recites “respective installment periods, each of the respective installment periods having a respective document retention duration.”

Also, for example, claim 10 recites “determining whether an installment period for a document retention key has elapsed ... a next installment period, the next document retention key having a document retention duration associated therewith.”

Further, for example, claim 16 recites “obtaining a retention access key, the retention access key being used to associate a respective document retention duration of a document retention policy with the electronic document, the retention access key being usable during the respective document retention duration following a beginning of a respective installment period of a periodic-installment retention schedule.”

Still further, for example, claim 25 recites “the retention policy having a respective document retention duration and a respective installment period.”

Ryan may teach a time-based access key that allows access “after a predetermined time in the future.” *See* Ryan, paragraph [0037]. However, even assuming “installment period,” as recited in claims 1, 10, 16, and 25, may be equivalent to Ryan’s time-based access key, which Applicants do not acquiesce to, Ryan contains no teaching or suggestion of “document retention duration” that is associated with “installment period,” as respectfully recited in claims 1, 10, 16, and 25. For example, as recited in claims 1, 10, 16, and 25 each “installment period” has “a document retention duration,” e.g., a beginning **and an end**. Ryan, on the other hand, teaches that the key is

supplied to a user once the time restriction is satisfied, and then can be used, implicitly without an end, to access documents. *See* Ryan, paragraphs [0038-0039].

“A Periodic-Installment Retention Schedule”

Claims 1, 10, 13, and 21 recite features that distinguish over the applied reference. For example, claims 1, 10, 13, and 21 recite "a periodic-installment retention schedule."

On page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner states, which Applicants do not acquiesce to, Ryan having one or more access keys associated with a predetermined time is equivalent to this recited feature of claims 1, 10, 13, and 21. However, “the periodic-installment retention schedule,” as recited in claims 1, 10, 13, and 21, allows one or more access keys to be associated with a single document. In contrast, as discussed above, since Ryan's time-based keys do not contemplate an end, there is no need in Ryan for multiple keys with different times to be associated with a single document. Ryan only teaches "a new time-based key pair" to be generated for all documents being released on that new day. *See* Ryan, paragraph [0053].

Therefore, because Ryan does not teach each and every feature of claims 1, 10, 13, 16, 21, and 25, Ryan cannot anticipate the claims.

Dependent claims 2-9 are similarly not anticipated by Ryan for the same reasons as independent claim 1, from which they depend, and further in view of their own respective features.

Dependent claims 11-12 are similarly not anticipated by Ryan for the same reasons as independent claim 10, from which they depend, and further in view of their own respective features.

Dependent claims 14-15 and new claim 26 are similarly not anticipated by Ryan for the same reasons as independent claim 13, from which they depend, and further in view of their own respective features.

Dependent claims 17-20 are similarly not anticipated by Ryan for the same reasons as independent claim 16, from which they depend, and further in view of their own respective features.

Dependent claims 22-24 are similarly not anticipated by Ryan for the same reasons as independent claim 21, from which they depend, and further in view of their own respective features.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-25 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will

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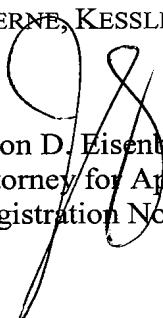
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expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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